The Rule of *Doing as We would be Done unto*, Explain'd

IN A

SERMON

Preach'd before Her

MAJESTY,

AT

St. *JAMES*'s Chappel,

On *Sunday November* 11th 1704.

St. MATTH. VII. 12.

All things whatsoever Ye would that Men should do unto You, do Ye even so to Them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.

By *Francis Atterbury*, D. D. Dean of *Carliſle*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majeſty.

Publiſh'd by Her Majeſty's ſpecial Command.

London: Printed and Sold by *H. Hills*, in *Black-fryars* near the Water-ſide, For the Benefit of the Poor. 1709.

St. MATTH. VII. 12.

All things whatſoever Ye would that Men ſhould do unto You, do Ye even ſo to Them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.

THE Sentence I have read to you is very fitly plac'd towards the Cloſe of our Saviour's admirable Sermon on the Mount; as being, in great meaſure, the Epitome and Sum of what the Divine Preacher had there diſcours'd more at large. Nor is it leſs fitly order'd to be recited at the Holy Table, in the moſt Solemn part of the Service of This Day; on which we met annually to Commemorate our Deliverance frem the attempts to thoſe bloody and mercileſs Men, who ſeem to have out-done all their Predeceſſors and Succeſſors in Wickedneſs, be a Notorious Contempt of this great Evangelical Rule, and of all the Principles of common Humanity. The Practice of thoſe Conſpirators was the perfect reverſe of this precept; and we cannot therefore better be Taught, or incited to deteſt the One, than by a due illuſtration and Inforcement of the other. This I ſhall attempt by offering to your Thoughts ſome Conſiderations, Firſt, on the rule here laid down; *All things whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do unto you, do ye even ſo to them*; and, then, on the ſhort, but full Character, or Encomium beſtow'd upon it: That it *is the Law and the Prophets*: Which ſhall be follow'd by ſome *Inferences*, naturally ariſing from the Whole; and the General reflections advanc'd, tho' they may all along be underſtood eaſily to refer, yet ſhall afterwards be particularly Apply'd, to the Subject of This day's ſolemnity.

As to the rule it ſelf, we may diſtinctly conſider the juſt Extent, and Bounds of it; the Reaſon of its Preferableneſs to all other rules, in point of Evidence and Conviction, the manifeſt Equity and Exactneſs? the peculiar Properties and Advantages of it.

All things whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do unto you do ye even ſo to them! Words of great force and energy: and, yet,

yet, all the moſt ſimple, plain, and perſpicuous that can be! and which therefore Commentators do (as they too often do) obſcure and perplex by a pretence of Explaining. The only poſſible Doubt is, concerning the *Extent* of the *Matter* contain'd in them: for it muſt be allow'd, that there are many Caſes, wherein We are by no means oblig'd to Grant that to Others, which we our ſelves perhaps (were We in Their Circumſtances, and They in Ours) might be Willing enough, unreaſonably willing, to Obtain from Them. A Benefactor is not bound to comply with the Demands of ſuch as ask unmerited Favours, tho' Conſcious, that He himſelf might be apt to make as Extravagant requeſts were it His turn to be the Object of another Man's Beneficence. A Magiſtrate is not at Liberty, much leſs under any Obligation, to turn the Edge of Juſtice from an Importunate offender, becauſe, if he himſelf were the Criminal, he ſhould certainly, and equally deſire to eſcape unpuniſh'd. The rule, therefore, which makes, what other men deſire of Us, the Meaſure of our dealing toward Them, is to be underſtood, not of Vicious and Exceſſive Deſires, but of ſuch only as are Fit and reaſonable; ſuch requeſts as we can, in our Calmeſt Thoughts, juſtifie to our ſelves; ſuch as, we are ſure, may be made without Indecency, and cannot be refus'd without Inhumanity. And, under this neceſſary Limitation, the precept of the Text comes to thus much; 'Put thy 'ſelf into ſuch or ſuch a Man's Condition, and conſider, what 'Treatment, what Favours, in that caſe, thou might'ſt fairly 'and juſtly expect from Others; and be thou ſure to deal 'with Him according to thoſe thy juſt and regular Expecta-'tions. And this I take to be the true Explication of that Other Equivalent Precept, given in the Goſpel, to *Love our Neighbours as our ſelves*; which we may then, in the moſt proper and ſtrict ſenſe of the Words, be ſaid to do, when we, firſt, place our Selves in our Neighbour's ſtead, and, then, learn to Love Him, by conſidering, what degree of Love and Goodwil, of Forbearance and Forgiveneſs, we might, under that Change of Circumſtances, challenge from him.

It may be thought, that the Rule, thus temper'd and qualify'd, will not be of any Special Uſe, or Moment to us, in

the Direction of our Practice; inaſmuch as the Lines of Duty do not ſeem to be more clearly mark'd out, by this method of Compariſon, than they would have been, by a Direct Injunction of our dealing with others, as Right reaſon, and our Conſciences inform us that we ought to deal with them. For, after all, when we have made Other mens Caſe ours, we are ſtill left to judge, what, in Equity an Reaſon, we might expect from Men, before we can determine, after what manner we are to behave our ſelves towards them. And, therefore, which way ſo ever we take the meaſure of our Duty, to the Bar of Equity and Reaſon, we muſt, in order to the fixing it, always finally appeal.

'Tis true, we muſt——But the maxim of the Text is that, which, of all others, doth moſt effectually aſſiſt us towards making a free uſe of our reaſon, and forming right Judgments of things, on ſuch Occaſions: for, by the means of it, we are able to conſider our Duty without prejudice, and to ſtate the Bounds of it impartially and fairly. When we determine amiſs concerning the Obligations incumbent upon us, in reſpect of Other men, 'tis by reaſon of that ſtrong weight of Self love, which hangs, like a Byaſs, on our minds, and ſecretly ſways them towards That ſide, on which our own Intereſt lyes. To ſet this Errour right we ſuppoſe our ſelves to be the men who are ſo to be dealt with; and, then, the ſame ſelfiſh Principle makes that appear very hard and unreaſonable, which before it inclin'd us to approve. And thus our wrap'd and perverted Judgment, by being bent as much towards the Oppoſite ſide, recovers its ſtraitneſs. The rule of the Text therefore is at the bottom, a Wiſe Art of rebating one degree of our Partiality by another; it enables us to take Two ſeveral Vicres of our Duty, to eye it under different Lights, and to ſee it by that means more diſtinctly and fully. And, in this ſenſe, *Meaſuring our ſelves by our ſelves, and comparing our ſelves with our ſelves*, we take the ſureſt way to be both Juſt, and Wiſe. 2 *Cor.* 10. 12.

There's nothing, we know, that gives a man ſo true and lively a Senſe of the ſufferings of others, or reſtrains him ſo powerfully from doing Unrighteous and oppreſſive things, as his

his having ſmarted formerly himſelf under the Experience of them. Now, the ſuppoſing another man's ill uſage to be Ours, is the giving our ſelves a preſent ſenſe, as it were a kind of feign'd Experience of it which doth, for the time ſerve all the purpoſes of a true one.

Upon theſe Accounts it is, that the precept of the Text carries greater Evidence, and a ſtronger degree of Conviction in it than any Other rule of morality: Its apparent Equity and reaſonableneſs is what we are next to conſider. And this is ſo plain a point as not to want, or indeed to be capable of, a ſolemn proof: For the precept manifeſtly aims at that, which is the known Foundation of Equity and Juſtice in all matters of Intercourſe between man and man; the reducing things to one Common ſtandard; by the Application of which they are all to be examin'd and try'd. *Deut.* 25. 13. 14. *Thou ſhalt not have in thy Bag*, or *in thine Houſe* (ſaid the *Levitical* Law) *divers Weights, and divers Meaſures; a Great and a Small*: [*i.e.* one wherewith to Buy; and another, wherewith to Sell] *but thou ſhalt have a perfect and juſt Weight, a perfect and juſt Meaſure ſhalt thou have.* What is ſaid here of Ordinary Traffick and Dealing, holds as truly of the General Commerce of Human Life, and that Exchange of good Offices by which Society is upheld; their muſt be a perfect Weight, and a juſt Meaſure, by which all Men are mutually obliged to regulate their Conduct, in acting and ſuffering, in commanding and obeying, in giving and receiving; and this can be no other than the Equal and Righteous Rule of the Text, the Doing in all caſes, and to all Perſons, even as we would be done unto. There is no one ſo Abſurd and Unreaſonable as not to ſee and acknowledge the Abſolute Equity of this Command, in the Theory, however he may ſwerve and decline from it in his Practice; and to agree upon it, as that Golden Mean, which, if Univerſally obſerv'd, would make the World Univerſally happy; every man a Benefactor, a good Angel, a Deity, as it were, to his Fellow Creatures; and Earth, the very Image and Foretaſte of Heaven! I need, I can ſay no more concerning the Reaſonableneſs of this precept: However, it may help to excite and quicken your Deſires, and Hopes of obeying it, if I proceed, as I pro-

po'sd, to point out ſome diſtinguiſhing Properties and Advantages of it.

The Firſt of which is, that it is alike Eaſie and Obvious to all Underſtandings, to the Meaneſt and moſt Ignorant Men, as well as to thoſe of the greateſt Parts and improvements. God is, on this, as well as on other Accounts, no Reſpecter of Perſons; having made that, which is moſt neceſſary, moſt Common; and conſequently, ſuited this Principle, which All Men have equal occaſion to uſe equally to the Apprehenſions of all Men. They therefore, who are incapable of long Trains and Deductions of Reaſon, and of adapting the ſeveral Rules of Morality to the various Circumſtances of Action, are yet able (as able as the acuteſt Philoſophers, or Caſuiſts) to look into their own Hearts, to ask this plain Queſtion, and to give a clear Anſwer to it; 'Would I be my ſelf content thus to be dealt 'with by others? why then ſhould I ſo deal with any Man;

Human Laws are often ſo numerous, as to eſcape our Memories; ſo darkly ſometimes and inconſiſtently worded, as to puzzle our underſtandings; and their Original Obſcurity is not ſeldom improv'd by the Nice Diſtinctions, and ſubtle Reaſonings of thoſe who profeſs to clear them: ſo that, under theſe ſeveral Diſadvantages, they loſe much of their Force and Influence, and, in ſome caſes, raiſe more Diſputes than perhaps they determine. But here is a Law, attended with none of theſe Inconveniences; the groſſeſt minds cannot miſapprehend it; the weakeſt memories are capable of retaining it; no perplexing Comment can poſſibly cloud it, the Authority of no man's Gloſs upon Earth can (if we are but ſincere) ſway us to make a wrong Conſtruction of it. What is ſaid of all the Goſpel Precepts by the Evangelical prophet, is more eminently true of this; *It is an High-way; and the Wayfaring man, tho' a fool, ſhall not err therein. Iſa.* 35. 8

'Tis not enough that a Rule be ſuited to all Capacities, it muſt be accommodated alſo, and lye ready, for preſent uſe upon all Exigences, and occaſions. And ſuch, remarkably ſuch, is that which our Lord here recommends to us. We can ſcarce be ſo far ſurpriz'd by an immediate neceſſity of acting, as not to have time for a ſhort Recourſe to it, room for a ſudden Glance,

Glance, as it were, upon it, in our minds; where it reſts, and ſparkles always, like the *Urim* and *Thummin* on the Breaſt of *Aaron*. There is no Occaſion for us to go in ſearch of it to the Oracles of Law, dead, or living, to the Code, or Pandects, to the Volumes of Divines, or Moraliſts; *Quod petis hic eſt*; we need look no farther than our ſelves for it: For (to uſe the oppoſite Expreſſions of *Moſes*) *This Commandment, which I command thee this Day, is not hidden from the, neither is it far off. It is not in Heaven, that thou ſhouldſt ſay, VVho ſhall go up for us to Heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither, is it beyond the Sea, that thou ſhouldſt ſay, Who ſhall go over the Sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy Mouth, and in thy heart, that thou may'ſt do it.* Deut. 30. 11, 12, 13, 14.

It is, moreover, a Precept, particularly fitted for Practice, as it involves in the very Notion of it a Motive, ſtirring us up to Do what it Enjoyns. Other moral maxims propoſe naked Truths to the *Underſtanding*, which operate often but faintly and ſlowly on the *VVill* and *Paſſions*, the two Active Principles of the mind of Man: but it is the peculiar Charecter of this, that it addreſſeth it ſelf equally to All theſe Powers; not only directs, but influences; imparts both Light, and Heat; and, at the ſame time that it informs us certainly and clearly, what we are to do, excites us alſo, in the moſt tender and moving manner, to the performance of it. For in truh, its Seat is not more in the Brain, than in the Heart of Man: It appeals to our very Senſes themſelves, and exerts its ſecret Force in ſo prevailing a way, that it is even Felt, as well as Underſtood by us.

The Laſt Recommendation of this Rule, I ſhall mention, is, its Vaſt and Comprehenſive Influence: For it extends to all Ranks and Conditions of Men, and to all kinds of Action and Intercourſe between them; to matters of Charity, generoſity, and Civility, as well as juſtice; to Negative, no leſs than Poſitive Duties. The Ruler, and the Ruled, are alike ſubject to it; Publick Communities can no more exempt themſelves from its Obligation, than Private Perſon; *All Kings muſt fall down before it, all Nations muſt do it Service. Pſ.* 72, 11. And, with reſpect to this Extent of it, it is, that our Bleſſed Lord pronounces it, in

the Text, to be *the Law, and the Prophets.* His meaning is, that, what ever Rules of the Second Table are deliver'd in the Law of *Moſes*, or in the Larger Comments and Explanations of that Law, made by the Other Writers of the Old Teſtament, (here, and elſewhere, ſtil'd *the Prophets*) they are all virtually compris'd in this one ſhort ſignificant Saying, *Whatever ye would that Men ſhould do unto you, do ye even ſo to Them*: From this, as from their Common Scource, they were all originally deriv'd and into this they may be all ultimately reſolv'd. *For all the Law is ulfilled in one word,* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *even in this, Thou ſhalt Love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*; *Gal.* 5. 14. And I have ſhew'd You that this Word is the ſame in ſenſe with the Word, or Percept of the Text; tho' it be not deliver'd in ſo clear, ſo expreſſive, and ſo convincing a Manner. And this Word therefore the ſame Apoſtle calls elſewhere, *The End of the commandment*; 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. and St. *James*, *J.* 2. 8. *the Royal Law*: *That* (they both mean) in which all the Lines of Duty, relating to our Neighbour, center, and under which, as under one common Head and Principle, they may be reduc'd and rang'd.

Various are the Uſes into which this Important Truth is capable of being improv'd: For from hence I might, in the firſt place, take Occaſion to conſider, Whether, and how far, the Precept here given be the *whole*, not only of the *Law*, and the *Prophets*, but of the *Goſpel* alſo; and what Evangelical duties there are, which ſeem, as the Schools ſpeak, to tranſcend it; to be (as Myſteries are in reſpect of Reaſon) not indeed *againſt* this great Principle, but *above*, and *beyond* it; and ſuch as we cannot thoroughly account for, without taking the conſideration of another World into our Schemes aud Reaſonings.

I might, in the next place, proceed to ſhew, how large a ſhare Moral Truths have, even in the Body of Reveal'd Doctrines; ſince the Precept of the Text, which comprehends only the Duty we owe to our Neighbour, is ſaid to be *the Law and the Prophets*. An Expreſſion not indeed to be taken rigorouſly, and in the Letter! but which may however be undorſtood to imply, that as a great part of Holy Writ is employ'd in directly preſſing the duties abrig'd in this Precept, ſo the Reſt of it plainly points and refers to them: Even the higheſt Myſteries of

Faith

Faith were not made known to us, without ſome regard to our Improvment in the lower Practical virtues; and the Knowledge of thoſe, unleſs it tends to quicken our Obedience to theſe, will be of no manner of ſervice to us, will neither better us in this World, not ſave us in the next.

From the Aſſertion, in the Cloſe of the Text, it may be yet farther, and more clearly inferr'd, That there is a Chain of Moral Reaſoning, by which the ſeveral Duties of the Second Table are connected together, and have an orderly dependance on one common Principle, out of which they were drawn. That Virtue, therefore, is not the blind Homage of our Nature, arbitrarily exacted from us, but a Duty fitted and proportion'd to the light of our Faculties, and every way our *Reaſonable Service*: *Rom.* 12. 1. in a word, that Morality is a true and proper Sience, and all the Parts of it capable of ſtrict Demonſtration. An obſervation, of manifold and Excellent uſe! For it teaches us to reject the pretences of thoſe vain and fancyful Men, who have fram'd, a Rule of Duty to themſelves, as contrary to the common Senſe and Reaſon, as it is to the Current Language of Mankind; ſo Refin'd and Sublime, as to be utterly unintelligible, and impracticable: It is to be learn'd, or confuted, in the method of other doctrines; It is to be made out only by the force of ſome Unaccountable Impreſſions, and by a Light that ſhines inward, but which cannot be communicated, or diſcover'd. But *We have not ſo learn'd Chriſt*; *Ep.* 4, 20. on the contary we are aſſur'd, that we do our Lord and maſter good Service, ſuch as he will own and reward, when we apply our ſelves to eſtabliſh the Truths of our Religion upon Principles of Reaſon, and to argue men into their duty by appealing to Natrual Light, to the Certainty of firſt Principles, and to the Evident deductions which may from thence be made by the ſure Rules of diſcourſe; and that we are not to regard the Cenſures of thoſe, who, on this account, ſhall ſtile us more moral Teachers, and Carnal Reaſoners, but will not allow us to ſpeak by the Spirit, or to be at all acquainted with the Life and Power of Godlineſs. As if Religion were a thing deſign'd not to be underſtood, or made out! But loſt ſomewhat of its native Majeſty and Force, when once we came to Reaſon upon it!

Nor

Nor would it be an Unprofitable Reflection to obſerve from hence the great Benignity and Goodneſs of God, who hath made even our *Own Will*, and our *Own ſelf-love*, a compleat Law of Action, and Meaſure of Duty to us. *All things whatſoever Ye would* [i.e. whatſoever Ye are willing] *that Men ſhould do unto You, do Ye even ſo to them*! Surely, a very Eaſie Yoak, and a very Light Burthen! We may be averſe perhaps from ſubmitting to the Divine Will, or to the Will of any of our fellow Creatures, exerciſing Authority over us; but can we be otherwiſe than contented, and pleas'd, in ſubmitting to our *Own* Will, whatever it is? and yet a ſubmiſſion to *That* (when regulated by proper Circumſtances, and Views) is all that is requir'd of us. Merciful Saviour, thou ſaidſt once indeed to thy father, as thou wer't Man, *Not my will, but thine be done*: *Luk.* 22.42. But who could expect that thou ſhouldſt have ſaid the ſame thing to Us too, as thou art God! However, thus in effect, thou haſt ſaid, in the Precept now before us. Teach us, O Lord, by the means of this Precept, ſo duly to regulate our Wills, that we may ſafely follow them! Make Thy Will, Ours; that ſo, in doing our Own Will, we may be ſure to fulfil Thine alſo!

We ſee from hence, how far the Goſpel is from ſuppreſſing, or checking the principle of *ſelf-love* in us, which it makes the Ground and Rule of all that Love we owe to Others; and which, therefore, we may Innocently nay Uſefully carry to what Degree, what Height we pleaſe, if we take but care that the Love of our Neighbour keeps pace with that of our ſelf, and is govern'd by it. Away then with thoſe Extravagant Flights of Devotion, which ſome pretended Saints (but real *Enthuſiaſts*) of the Church of *Rome* have indulg'd themſelves in; who make it Neceſſary for every Chriſtian, in order to perfection, to diveſt himſelf of all manner of regard for himſelf; nay to deſpiſe, to hate, and to abhor himſelf, in the utmoſt Propriety of the Expreſſion. Certainly, if what theſe Myſtical Divines ſay, be true, impoſſible it is for a a perfect man to Love his Neighbour at all: Since he is not allow'd, by their Scheme, to love himſelf; and yet is bound to love his Nighbour, as he loves himſelf, (or, which is all one, to do as he would be done unto) by our Lord's expreſs Determination.

Several

Several other weighty Truths there are, which this fruitful Theme would ſuggeſt; and moſt of thoſe, I have mention'd, might deſerve to be handled more largely. But I muſt contract my thoughts on this head, that I may have room to inſiſt on one Plain, Uſeful Inference, wherein I am to apply the Doctrin hitherto deliver'd. It is this---That, if the Precept of the Text be ſo fundamental and Neceſſary, ſo obvious and Eaſie, ſo Sure and Safe, ſo full and Comprehenſive a Rule of Life and Manners; how inexcuſable, upon all theſe accounts, Thoſe muſt be, who, throughout the whole Courſe of their Actions, ſhew that they do not regard it. I ſhall, firſt, expoſtulate the Caſe with ſuch as offend againſt this Precept at large; and, then, conſider that particular and flagrant Inſtance of the Breach of it, which This Day affords us.

Are we then, any of us, profeſs'd Contemners of Reveal'd Religion? We would yet be thought to have a mighty Reverence for Reaſon (ſince by the help of Reaſon it is, that we endeavour to throw off Revelation;) and while we have, this its Eldeſt and moſt Unqueſtion'd Law ſhould, methinks, be very Sacred to us. What! ſhall the great Maſters of Exact Thought and Idolizers of Reaſon live in a perpetual Contradiction to the firſt Principle of it! will they, who have ſo little Light to guide themſelves by (that of Nature alone,) neglect to make uſe of that little which they have? And yet, perhaps, there is no ſort of Men whatever, that offends ſo broadly againſt the Evident righteouſneſs of this rule, as Thoſe, who pretend moſt to magnify the Principle from whence it flows. There are none who purſue their Pleaſures ſo keenly, and ſooth up all their Paſſions ſo carefully; are every way ſo Selfice, and ſo directly ſet in Oppoſition to this Generous and equal Maxim; as the Men, who will tell you, They adore plain Common Senſe, but cannot digeſt a myſtery. From whence it is manifeſt, that their Diſeſteem of Faith proceeds not from any juſt eſteem they have of Reaſon, or any regard they bear to its Laws; but merely from a Spirit of Libertiniſm, and a deſire of coming under as few Obligations as is poſſible. Tis not a freedom of Thinking, which they aim at; but a freedom of Living, and of Doing what they pleaſe, without the Control of Law, or Fear of Puniſh-

Puniſhment. And, in order to this, one good Step is, to ſhake off Reveal'd Religion; and ſuch an one, as is uſually follow'd by another, the parting with All Religion, even that which Nature it ſelf preſcribes. To theſe Reaſoners therefore we ſay, that the Rule of *doing as they wou'd be done by* is not (what they are ſo jealous of any Impoſition upon their Underſtandings, any puzzling myſterious Doctrine; It is all Pure Light, and Evidence, *and in it is no Darkneſs at all.* 1 *Jo.* 1.5. Why then do They not ſubmit to it? Why do they, of all Men Living, do as they would not be done by? Oppreſs and trample upon their Inferiors. Revile their Betters, and ſupplant their Equals? Carry on their unlawful deſires, without ſtint, or Bounds, to the Injuring the Property of thoſe who are too weak to contend with them to the defaming their Neighbour's Reputation, or defiling his Bed? Why, in a word, do they make themſelves the only Centre of all their actions, Wiſhes, and deſigns? and regard nothing, that is without them, any farther then it may be uſeful to their purpoſes and enjoyments? Let us ſee this Lofty Race of Men in good earneſt ſtoop to this plain dictate of Reaſon, and then we ſhall be inclin'd to think them ſincere, when they pretend to hearken to the Voice of Reaſon, and that only; and may have room to hope, that the good God, who ſees them honeſtly practiſing all thoſe Virtues which flow from this Rule, will improve upon that foundation, and, in his own time, graft Grace upon nature.

But do we (as every one, I truſt, doth who hears me this day) profeſs our ſelves to be the diſciples of Chriſt? And can we think our ſelves really to be what we profeſs, while we openly and avowedly tranſgreſs this great Precept of Chriſt, the very Hinge, upon which the Morality of his Goſpel turns? We may boaſt, if we pleaſe, of our having all Knowledge, and all Faith, and of our underſtanding all Myſteries; but if we do not govern our Lives by this Truth, which is evident by Nature, 'twill be to no purpoſe, that we firmly aſſent to thoſe Truths, which are reveal'd to us by Grace. We deny Chriſtianity, indeed, if we reject Theſe: But if we live in contradiction to That, we renounce the Principles of Human nature it ſelf, without ſuppoſing which, there can be no Chriſtianity.

Let

Let us profeſs, and Believe what we will; unleſs we Do alſo as we would be done unto, all our Faith, and our Religion is vain. Nor is it Vain only, and Unprofitable, in reſpect of our Selves; it is alſo of pernicious Conſequence to others, who, from ſuch Inſtances as theſe, will take occaſion to diſparage the Efficacy and Influence of Reveal'd Religion, and to harden themſelves in their Infidelity. The Ridiculers of Divine Faith, the Diſpiſers of myſteries, never exerciſe their Scornful Talent with greater Pleaſure, or Succeſs, than when they attack the Principles of Chriſtianity, by comparing them with the Practice of Chriſtians; eſpecially in this Capital Article of all Schemes of Religion, *the doing to Men as we would be done unto*; and can point out our manifeſt and ſcandalous Violations of this plain Rule of Reaſon, while we pretend to embrace all the Sublime Doctrins, and to inherit all the Glorious Advantages of a Divine Revelation. The Heathen Emperor *Severus*, *ſhall riſe up in the judgment with ſuch a Generation of* Chriſtians, *and condemn them*: *Mat.* 12. 41. For He, by the Light of Nature, was taught highly to reverence this Precept; it was legible on the Walls of his Palace, and in the Banners of his Army; it was engrav'd in his very heart, and tranſcrib'd from thence into his Practice. Would to God, that many of thoſe pretended Vicars of Chriſt, who have ſince Erected their Thrones in the Cheif Seat of this Princes Empire, had equally ſucceeded him in an Awful aud Conſcientious Regard for this Excellen Maxim, and had been, in that Reſpect, as good Chriſtians, (or rather, as good Heathens) as He was! They would not, then, have become the Authors and Fomenters of all that diſcord and Confuſion, all thoſe Wars and Maſſacres. thoſe Conſpiracies and Rebellions, with which they have, for many Centuries paſt, ſhook the Thrones of Princes, and diſturb'd the Quiet of this Weſtern World. Nor would they, in order to cover, and palliate theſe wicked Attempts, have openly encourag'd the Caſuiſts of their Communion to publiſh ſuch looſe and ſcandalous Syſtems of Morals, as. inſtead of being Comments on this Rule, are a perfect Contradiction to it, and are calculated, not to bring up Mens Obediene to the Terms of the Goſpel, but to bring down the Goſpel

Terms,

Terms, as near as can be, to the Infirmities and Failings, nay to the Corruptions and Vices of Human Nature.

The Time wuold fail me, ſhould I attempt to mention the moſt remarkable Inſtances, which would readily offer themſelves in either kind: That one Inſtance, which the Treaſon of This Day affords us, doth, in effect, comprehend the Wickedneſs of all the reſt; and is, when briefly inſiſted on, ſufficient to raiſe in us a due Abhorrence of thoſe Ungodly Principles and Practices, by which the *Papacy* hath enlarg'd its Intereſts, and eſtabliſh'd its Spiritual Tyranny over the Underſtandings and Conſciences of Men.

'The Treaſon of this Day was a Contrivance, Wicked 'and Cruel beyond Example, and beyond Expreſſion: Such 'as the Ears of any honeſt Heathen would, when they heard it 'related, tingle at: Such as, if perpetrated in the Infancy of 'Chriſtianity, would have gone near to have arreſted the 'Courſe of it, in Countries as yet unconverted; and to have 'render'd even the Miracles, done for its Confirmation, inſignificant and vain: In a word, Such, as nothing but the Malice of one of that Order, which hath been, ever ſince its 'firſt Erection, the Scourge and Peſt of mankind, could have 'Projected; nor Any, but ſome of its Bigotted and Furious 'Votaries, durſt to have Executed. Bleſſed *Jeſu!* That ever 'men more particularly calling themſelves by thy Name, 'and pretending more immediately to devote themſelves to 'Thy Service, ſhould ſo far forget the Law of Humanity and 'Kindneſs which was viſible in every part of thy Behaviour, 'while thou waſt on Earth, and is ſtill legible in every Page 'of the Goſpel! That they ſhould be miſled, by the perverſe 'Comments of their own Caſuiſts upon this Law, ſo far, as to 'believe that a maſſacring Spirit was reconcileable to the Spirit of Chriſtianity, and that the Genuin Principle of it cold 'lead, or permit men ro overturn States and Kingdoms! Such 'Ill Effects may ſpring from the beſt of Cauſes, Religion, 'when perverted and abus'd! ſuch Horrid impieties may men 'arrive at, when they have once fix'd this perſuaſion firmly in 'themſelves, that how Vile ſoever the Attempts are, in which 'they engage, yet, if the End be good, it juſtifies, and ſancti-

'fies

' fies the Means; and that the plaineſt Rules and Du-
' ties of the Goſpel do not bind Thoſe, who are, as
' they imagine, propagating the Interſts of it.

Bleſſed be thy Name, O Lord, who did'ſt, as on this Day, after a marvellous manner, diſappoint their Bloody Deſigns, when they were even ready to take place; and did'ſt ſuffer our Princes, our Prelates, our Nobles, all the Chief Ornaments and Supports of thy pure and undefil'd Religion Eſtabliſh'd among us, to *eſcape out of their Hands, even as a Bird from the ſnare of the Fowler*! Surely *the wrath of man bath prais'd, and ſhall praiſe thee: — The Remainder of Wrath ſhalt thou reſtrain. Pſ.* 124. 7. *Pſ* 76. 10.

I need not endeavour to raiſe your Thankfulneſs for the Mercies of this Day by ſhewing, that as diſtant as they are, they ſtill belong to us. Some Bleſſings wax not old, or decay; but like the Rode of the Tribe of *Levi* laid up in the Tabarnacle though ſeemingly ſapleſs and dead, do yet ſhoot, and ſend forth their Bloſſoms. And ſuch is that, we now Commemorate; even now we taſte the ſweet Fruite and Effects of it: For to this Days Deliverance (this Day's double Deliverance) it is owing, that we are freed from the Fears of *Papal* Superſtition and Bondage, that we enjoy all our Religious, and Civil Liberties, all that is dear and valuable to us, in reſpect of this World, or Anothor; and even that we ſee Her on the Throne (the Throne of her Royal Anceſtors, deſign'd this Day for Slaughter) Who, by ſitting there, protects, and ſecures us in all theſe Enjoyments.

Great and manifold have the Inſtances been of God's Interpoſition to reſcue this Church and Nation, when they moſt needed it; nor is his *Hand yet ſhortned that it cannot*, or will not, *ſave*: *Iſ.* 59. 1. For, behold, what mighty things he hath lately wrought for us! In how ſeaſonable and ſurprizing a Manner, he hath bleſs'd the Arms, which have been taken up in defence of his True Religion, and of the Liberties of *Europe*, and the Rights of Mankind againſt the Common Invader and Deſtroyer of all of them! whoſe haughty heart he hath at laſt hum-

humbled, and ſtain'd his boaſted Glory; the Vain Idol, which that proud Monarch ſet up, and commanded all Nations to fall down and worſhip! the ſucceſs, which God hath given us, is great in it ſelf; but much greater in the Conſequences which it ſeems to promiſe. For who knows but that, by this ſingle Blow, the Fate of that Kingdom may be decided; of that Inſolent Kingdom, which thought *ſhe had put her truſt in the Rock Num.* 24. 21. whither none could approach to hurt her, and ſeem'd (in the expreſſions of the Prophet) *to ſay in her heart, I ſhall be a Lady for ever, I am, and none elſe beſide me? Iſ.* 47 7, 8. Who knows, but that the mighty Hunter of *Men* may, from this moment, be oblig'd to forego his Chace? May find it come to his Turn, to fly, and be perſu'd *every where*? And have the Preys, which he hath violently ſeized, raviſh'd again out of his Paws, and from his Teeth! Who knows, but that the ſeveral Victories which he hath meanly Stollen, or Purchas'd, may now, after a more fair and generous manner, be regain'd? And all the Laurels, he unjuſtly wears, be torn from his Temples, and plac'd on *the Head of Another*, who better *deſerves them*! Certain it is, that God hath already begun to do theſe great things for us; which, unleſs we are wanting to our ſelves he will as certainly finiſh. Already, ſince this Blow was given, we have ſeen the happy Effects of it, in the Publick Confeſſion of an Exhauſted Exchequer, and a Languiſhing *Credit*: Evils, which, God be thanked, are neither felt nor fear'd by Us at Home, under the preſent Vigilant and Wiſe Adminiſtration.

10 FE 58

Do Thou, O *God, we beſeech thee, go on to ſtrengthen the thing which thou haſt wrought for us! Shew thy Servants thy Work and their Children thy Glory! And the Glorious Majeſty of the Lord our God be upon us! Proſper thou the Work of our Hands upon us! O, proſper thou our handy work. Pſ.* 67. 28. *Pſ.* 90. 16. 17.

FINIS.